



## Avian (H5N1) & Pandemic Influenza Update

[www.pandemicflu.utah.gov](http://www.pandemicflu.utah.gov)

May 5, 2008

### Summary:

In the past four weeks there were:

- 3 cases (2 deaths) in Egypt and
- 4 cases (3 deaths) in Indonesia

caused by human influenza due to H5N1 reported by the World Health Organization (WHO).

Researchers have concluded that limited person-to-person transmission was responsible for a case of H5N1 in China last year. In this situation, a son transmitted the disease to his father. In addition, researchers have also concluded that limited person-to-person transmission was responsible for the infection of several family members in Pakistan last year. Most of the reported instances of limited transmission occurred between individuals who are related rather than spread to unrelated individuals (such as healthcare workers). This would suggest that there is a genetic component to susceptibility at this time.

At this time there is no evidence that the virus has mutated and become capable of efficient person-to-person transmission.

### Avian activity:

The following activity is due to the detection of H5N1 in birds. Typically, a country identifies affected birds, and then culls healthy birds to prevent additional spread.

Switzerland identified a wild duck infected with H5N1.

South Korea had identified H5N1 in duck farms.

India (Northern) continues to report the presence of H5N1 in birds near the Bangladesh border.

Russia (Far East) reports a cluster in birds in a local village.

Japan has identified wild swans with H5N1.

### Promising Practices:

The Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy of the University of Minnesota (CIDRAP) has identified and made available state-produced resources that assist with planning or preparing for an influenza pandemic. We will present some of these promising practices in subsequent editions of this update.

This month's highlight is from Platte County, Missouri. Their website, <http://www.plattecountyhealthdept.com/crc/>, lists a challenge to individuals in communities to plan for disasters. They present a 26 week "shopping list" to help people identify and purchase preparedness essentials.

**Publications of Note:**

- The events surrounding the epizootic (epidemic in animals e.g. birds) of H5N1 in Southeast Asia are examined in: Mapping H5N1 Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza Risk in Southeast Asia. PNAS, 25 March 2008; 105 (12): 4769-2772. This paper finds an association between the continued presence of the virus in local bird populations with the intensity of rice cropping and the density of humans and ducks. This article is available at no charge from: <http://www.pnas.org/cgi/reprint/105/12/4769>.

**Human illness due to Influenza A (H5N1):**

As of March 26, 2008, the WHO has reported cumulative totals of 382 human cases and 241 deaths in 14 countries since 2003. During 2008, 31 cases and 24 deaths have been confirmed in China, Egypt, Indonesia, and Viet Nam.

**Current World Health Organization (WHO) phase of pandemic alert:**

Pandemic Alert Phase 3 (No or very limited human-to-human transmission of any influenza virus).

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